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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Turkmenistan

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirtieth session from 7 to 18 May 2018. The review of Turkmenistan was held at the 1st meeting, on 7 May 2018. The delegation of Turkmenistan was headed by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Vepa Hajyyev. At its 10th meeting, held on 11 May 2018, the Working Group adopted the report on Turkmenistan.

2. On 10 January 2018, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Turkmenistan: Burundi, Croatia and Pakistan.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Turkmenistan:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/TKM/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/TKM/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/TKM/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America was transmitted to Turkmenistan through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The head of the delegation of Turkmenistan expressed confidence that a constructive dialogue in the working group would help to achieve further progress in the implementation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of citizens of Turkmenistan.

6. During the reporting period, Turkmenistan had engaged in a dialogue with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture. Subsequently, the Government had started to follow up on the concluding observations received from those Committees.

7. A series of efforts had been made to improve domestic legislation to bring it into line with international human rights standards. In 2016, Turkmenistan had adopted a new Constitution with an expanded section on human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Constitution placed a strong emphasis on the universally accepted norms of international law. The Government had focused its efforts on ensuring the implementation of the provisions of international treaties at the national level.

8. The Constitution had introduced the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsperson). Subsequently, Parliament had adopted the Ombudsperson Act in 2016, which had established the mandate and functions of the Ombudsperson. The Law had been drafted in cooperation with relevant international experts, including from the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It had come into force in January 2017 and the Ombudsperson had been elected in March 2017. In April 2018, the Ombudsperson had submitted its first annual report.

9. The Government had adopted the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Turkmenistan for the period 2015–2020, the National Action Plan on Human Rights in Turkmenistan for the period 2016–2020 and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons for the period 2016–2018.

10. The delegation reported on the implementation of a number of recommendations from the second review cycle. Turkmenistan had taken measures to strengthen cooperation with the international human rights mechanisms. The Government had carried out several initiatives within the Human Rights Council, including co-sponsoring the Council's resolutions on gender equality and mainstreaming a gender perspective into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and on the realization of human rights through sport. The Government had been planning a visit by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights in the coming years. The authorities had held meetings with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to exchange views on selected cases and discuss further mutual cooperation.

11. The authorities had cooperated with the relevant international organizations, including the International Labour Organization (ILO), on issues of forced labour. Some high-level officials of ILO had visited Turkmenistan to provide advice and technical assistance on the issues of ratification of new conventions and on the implementation of those conventions that had been already ratified by Turkmenistan.

12. The delegation reported on some measures that had been taken to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. The authorities, in cooperation with the United Nations country team in Turkmenistan had developed a three-stage plan on how to incorporate those goals and relevant targets at the national level. As a result of those efforts, the President had adopted a national action plan on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Turkmenistan. In addition, a high-level national committee and interdepartmental committee on technical matters of the implementation of the goals had been established.

13. Since its second universal periodic review, Turkmenistan had acceded to a number of international treaties, including the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 2003 (No. 185) and the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1954 and 1999 Protocols thereto.

14. National experts had examined the question of accession to other international treaties, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention against Discrimination in Education.

15. Turkmenistan had adopted in 2016 amendments to the Law on Combating Trafficking in Persons and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons for the period 2016–2018. The Government had developed standard operating procedures for the effective identification of trafficking victims and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the National Action Plan.

16. An anti-corruption law had been adopted in 2014. Subsequently, a State programme on combating corruption and an action plan for its implementation had been adopted in 2017. The Government had established a State agency on combating economic crimes.

17. Turkmenistan had adopted the Information Protection Act in 2014, which regulated matters related to the exercise of the right to seek, receive, produce, use and disseminate information, and also the application of information technologies and the protection of information. The Act on the Legal Regulation of the Development of the Internet and the Provision of Internet Services in Turkmenistan had been adopted in 2014. The delegation provided detailed information to demonstrate an increase in Internet access and the use of modern communication technologies by the general population. It noted that no Internet

access restrictions had been identified, including on publishing information on local and foreign websites.

18. The delegation responded to a statement claiming there had been a ban on several thousand individuals, stating that such an assertion was incorrect and that restrictions exercised on exiting the country had been carried out in line with national legislation and in the interest of public security and the safety of individuals.

19. The delegation explained that the authorities had continued efforts to ensure the realization of the right to freedom of religion by maintaining regular contact with the representatives of religious organizations and by organizing meetings to bring together various religious organizations and churches.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

20. During the interactive dialogue, 74 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

21. The Netherlands welcomed the adoption by Turkmenistan of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and the National Action Plan on Human Rights. It remained concerned about the continued pressure on human rights defenders and the media.

22. Nigeria commended Turkmenistan for its enactment of the Trafficking in Persons Act 2016 and for its efforts to combat trafficking in person, to ensure equality and non-discrimination, to promote religious tolerance among its population and to strengthen the legal framework to bring it into compliance with international human rights standards.

23. Norway welcomed the participation of Turkmenistan in the universal periodic review. It remained concerned about the human rights situation in the country.

24. Paraguay recognized the important work done by the Interdepartmental Commission on Compliance with the International Obligations Undertaken by Turkmenistan in the Field of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, which served as a platform for follow-up to the recommendations received from various human rights bodies.

25. The Philippines congratulated Turkmenistan for the adoption in 2016 of its new Constitution, including new articles safeguarding civil rights and fundamental freedoms. It commended Turkmenistan for having ratified several human rights treaties and for its work in fighting trafficking in persons.

26. Poland welcomed the adoption of the 2016 Ombudsperson Act, which had established the rights, duties and authority of the Ombudsperson. It noted that the Ombudsperson should act independently and be granted with an adequate budget.

27. Portugal welcomed the adoption of the new Constitution and the fact that it included a new section on human rights and fundamental freedoms. It noted with appreciation the adoption of the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating trafficking in persons.

28. Qatar welcomed the report of Turkmenistan regarding the implementation of the recommendations received in the second cycle of the universal periodic review. It welcomed the adoption of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons.

29. The Republic of Korea noted the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights and the strengthened human rights protections contained in the new Constitution, adopted in 2016. It also noted the active cooperation of Turkmenistan with the human rights treaty bodies.

30. The Republic of Moldova welcomed the adoption of national action plans on gender equality, on human rights and on combating trafficking in persons. It encouraged the Government to consolidate measures for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned policies. It noted concerns expressed about the underrepresentation of women in public and private sectors.

31. The Russian Federation noted with appreciation the new provisions on the Office of the Ombudsperson in the new Constitution and reforms that had been made in the health sector. It noted the adoption of the State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act and a programme for enhancing the employment sector and creating new jobs for the period up to 2020, as well as the action plan for its implementation.

32. Saudi Arabia noted efforts to improve further the cooperation with the United Nations, especially with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the period 2016–2020.

33. Senegal praised Turkmenistan for its ratification of a number of international instruments and its adoption in 2016 of a new Constitution, which focused on the multiparty political system and respect for human rights.

34. Serbia encouraged the Government to improve its cooperation with the human rights mechanism of the United Nations. It welcomed the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson and the adoption of numerous laws that complied with the relevant human rights treaties.

35. Slovakia noted with appreciation the adoption of the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating trafficking in persons. It noted the adoption in 2016 of a new Constitution, which included a section on human rights but also provided for limitations of those rights made by law.

36. Slovenia welcomed the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson and encouraged Turkmenistan to ensure its compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). It expressed concern at the human rights situation in the Turkmenistan, in particular allegations involving enforced disappearances and torture, and restrictions to the enjoyment of freedom of movement and expression.

37. Spain welcomed with satisfaction the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson and the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons. It was concerned at the high number of allegations of torture and ill-treatment against detainees in Turkmenistan.

38. Sweden stated that the enforced disappearance of prisoners had continued and remained systemic.

39. Switzerland deplored that the human rights situation in Turkmenistan had not improved since the previous review. The visits of several special procedure mandate holders had been on pending for a long time. Switzerland remained particularly concerned at the incarceration rate and the conditions of detention in Turkmenistan.

40. Tajikistan noted the progress that had been made in Turkmenistan in the area of human and the establishment of the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

41. Togo congratulated Turkmenistan for the progress it had made since the second review in reforming the national human rights system, in particular the adoption in 2016 of a new Constitution, which included new provisions on human rights. It encouraged Turkmenistan to continue those efforts with a view to improving the human rights situation in the country.

42. Ukraine noted the efforts undertaken by Turkmenistan to improve the institutional and legislative framework for human rights, including the ratification of several international treaties, the adoption of the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating trafficking in persons, as well as the adoption of the law on the Office of the Ombudsperson.

43. The United Kingdom remained concerned by allegations of torture, incommunicado detentions and restrictions on access to justice and access to information in Turkmenistan. It was also concerned by restrictions on the rights to freedom of movement, expression, association and religion or belief and the use of forced labour to harvest cotton.

44. The United States of America appreciated the efforts Turkmenistan had made to protect conscientious objectors and improve prison conditions. However, it was concerned

at the reported use of excessive force by security forces, undue restrictions placed on the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, religion and movement, and at harsh prison conditions. It urged Turkmenistan to allow all individuals to exercise their right to freedom of expression.

45. Uruguay welcomed the measures Turkmenistan had implemented since its second review, in particular the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights and measures for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

46. Uzbekistan welcomed the legal reforms in Turkmenistan and its adoption of laws aimed at strengthening the national human rights protection system. It noted the fact that Turkmenistan accorded particular attention to economic, social and cultural rights and the protection of the rights of children and women.

47. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela commended Turkmenistan for its social programmes for all, its commitment aimed to promote gender equality and the incorporation of the establishment of a national human rights institution in the Constitution.

48. Yemen welcomed the report of Turkmenistan regarding the implementation of the recommendations received in the previous universal periodic review. It commended Turkmenistan for its important efforts aimed at improving the human rights situation in the country.

49. Afghanistan noted the efforts of Turkmenistan in reforming its national system for the protection of human rights. It commended Turkmenistan for having submitted periodic reports to the human rights bodies, particularly the Human Rights Committee.

50. Algeria commended Turkmenistan for having ratified several international treaties. It noted with satisfaction the adoption in 2016 of the new Constitution, which included guarantees for human rights in compliance with international human rights law.

51. Argentina congratulated Turkmenistan for the adoption in 2016 of its new Constitution and for the establishment of a national human rights institution. It noted the effort of Turkmenistan aimed at improving the national legislation related to hate crimes.

52. Armenia welcomed the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights, the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. It encouraged Turkmenistan to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights and to ratify human rights instruments.

53. Australia appreciated the steps Turkmenistan had taken aimed at establishing a national human rights institution through the Office of the Ombudsperson. It was concerned that civil and political rights were restricted in practice. It welcomed the introduction of a prison reform programme.

54. Austria welcomed an increase in number of projects Turkmenistan had undertaken with OSCE and the measures it had adopted to improve the legal and institutional framework. It noted that incommunicado detentions had recently been reported and asked Turkmenistan to give an update on its intentions to invite independent authorities, including international monitors, to visit prisons.

55. Azerbaijan praised Turkmenistan for its commitment to the universal periodic review and its active engagement with the human rights treaty bodies. It noted with appreciation the measures it had taken to promote gender equality in public administration.

56. Bangladesh commended Turkmenistan for having adopted in 2016 a new Constitution, with a focus on safeguarding human rights in line with its international human rights obligations. It also noted its adoption of laws and policy measures to combat corruption and human trafficking and those related to the education, housing and health sectors.

57. Belarus welcomed the adoption by Turkmenistan of a number of policy documents to ensure a holistic approach to the protection of human rights, including the National Action Plan on Human Rights and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. It noted the efforts Turkmenistan had made to combat human trafficking, including the implementation of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons.

58. The delegation of Turkmenistan, referring to cooperation with special procedure mandate holders, noted that dialogue had been held with some mandate holders in 2017 and 2018. The Government had provided required information to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances related to pending cases. The Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights had responded positively to the Government's intention to welcome a visit to Turkmenistan in the period 2018–2019.

59. In December 2017, the Deputy Foreign Minister had met with a regional representative of OHCHR to discuss on how to intensify further the cooperation with OHCHR on promoting human rights.

60. The new Constitution had provided equal rights and opportunities to women and men. A law adopted in 2015 had established further measures to ensure gender equality. In total, 24 per cent of all decision-making posts were held by women. Women had accounted for 25 per cent of total members of Parliament elected in 2018, and the Speaker of Parliament was also a woman.

61. The strategic tasks set out in the National Plan of Action on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020 were directly geared to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. One of the goals of the Plan was to change and eradicate stereotypes leading to discrimination against women, through public awareness-raising campaigns, as well as training for and workshop discussions among various professional groups. A nationwide media campaign had been launched to raise the awareness of society of gender equality and the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other relevant legislation. Gender equality had been included in a training programme for civil servants, targeting mid-level officials.

62. A national action plan on the rights of the child was being developed by the Interdepartmental Commission with expert input from UNICEF. The plan had been developed based on recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also included measures to address child labour, in line with the recommendations of ILO.

63. The new Constitution contained a provision on the prevention of forced labour and the worst forms of child labour. The Government had not received any complaints on forced labour. It continued its cooperation with experts of ILO. The amendments to the relevant legislation had been made to raise the minimum employment age from 16 to 18. Turkmenistan envisaged developing indicators relating to target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

64. Access to drinking water had improved as a result of the efforts made under the general programme for the supply of clean drinking water to population centres for the period up to 2020, under the close monitoring of the Ministry of Health and the medical industry. According to 2016 data, the proportion of the population living in households using improved drinking water sources was 83 per cent. Such access was almost universal in urban areas, at 98 per cent, while the proportion in rural areas was 73 per cent. The proportion of the population that had access to improved sanitation was consistently high, at 99 per cent.

65. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was actively implementing the programme to improve the employment of persons with disabilities. The Ministry had established a quota for the employment of persons with disabilities as well as for families with children with disabilities. In 2016, the President had adopted a decree containing a plan of action for the period 2017–2020 to ensure the full realization of the right to work for persons with disabilities. According to figures from the State pension fund, the employment of persons with disabilities had increased.

66. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had taken an active participation in the development and implementation of a number of national action plans, including on health, human rights and gender equality. A new law on NGOs had been adopted in 2014, under which foreign citizens or non-citizens could be founding members. The 2017 law on charity

activities permitted donors to carry out charity activity individually or through the establishment of charity foundations.

67. A new law on freedom of religion and religious organizations had been adopted in 2016 to define the requirement for the establishment and functioning of religious communities and organizations. The law defined instances when an organization could be closed by a court decision. Eight new religious organizations had been registered since 2016. No complaints had been registered on the violation of the right to freedom of religion or belief.

68. Belgium welcomed the establishment of the Commissioner for Human Rights. It expressed concern about the persistence of gender violence and about conditions in detention facilities, particularly the use of torture. It emphasized that civil society played an important role in ensuring human rights.

69. Brazil commended Turkmenistan for the adoption in 2016 of the Constitution with strengthened provisions on human rights, the establishment of the position of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the adoption of national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating human trafficking. It encouraged Turkmenistan to align its law on citizenship with international standards on statelessness.

70. Bulgaria acknowledged the adoption of the new Constitution and national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating human trafficking. It encouraged Turkmenistan to effectively implement new policies and to ensure independence of the newly established Commissioner for Human Rights.

71. Burundi welcomed measures taken by Turkmenistan to improve the human rights situation in the country, including by establishing the Commissioner for Human Rights and adopting the National Action Plan on Human Rights. It also welcomed efforts to ensure the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities, including in access to employment and to education.

72. Canada encouraged Turkmenistan to strengthen protections for civil society and women and to combat enforced disappearances. It expressed concern about difficulties faced by civil society in operating effectively due to legal restrictions.

73. Chile noted the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson, the adoption in 2016 of a new Constitution and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. With reference to a recommendation it had made in the previous cycle, Chile was concerned at the lack of progress in ensuring the right to freedom of expression.

74. China noted that Turkmenistan was committed to the achievement of sustainable development and the improvement of the living standards of its people. Turkmenistan had also made progress in the fields of the rule of law, protecting the rights of women and children and persons with disabilities and combating trafficking in human beings.

75. Cuba noted the efforts of Turkmenistan in strengthening its democratic principles and legal framework, developing civil society and ensuring the realization of economic and social rights.

76. Czechia appreciated the adoption of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020, the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020 and the Ombudsperson Act. It encouraged Turkmenistan to translate those Plans into concrete improvements in practice.

77. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea noted the accession by Turkmenistan to additional international instruments during the reporting period and measures it had taken to strengthen its human rights legal framework and institutional capacity and to improve the quality of life and education.

78. Denmark noted that Turkmenistan had accepted a recommendation to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture during the second universal periodic review and stressed that the dialogue with the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture remained highly valuable to all States working to prevent torture and ill-treatment.

79. Djibouti commended Turkmenistan for its adoption in 2016 of a new Constitution that introduced the multiparty system, integrated many provisions of international treaties to which Turkmenistan was a party and enshrined the rights and freedoms of citizens.

80. Egypt welcomed new constitutional provisions protecting fundamental rights and freedoms plus amendments to domestic legislation guaranteeing respect for human rights standards. It further expressed appreciation for the National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020.

81. Estonia encouraged Turkmenistan to accept and facilitate the requested visits by special procedure mandate holders and extend an open invitation to all of them to visit the country. It remained concerned about laws and practices that restricted the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, including restrictions on Internet access and online content.

82. France regretted that institutional changes like the establishment of the Ombudsperson had remained without effect since 2013. Moreover, the elections of 25 March did not seem to indicate any improvement in terms of democracy.

83. Georgia welcomed the strengthening of national human rights institutions through the establishment of the position of Commissioner for Human Rights, in line with the recommendations of the second universal periodic review. It noted the accession of Turkmenistan to a number of international treaties, including the Paris Agreement.

84. Germany welcomed the adoption of national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating human trafficking. It remained concerned about the continuing deterioration regarding freedom of expression. It condemned the persistent use of torture and ill-treatment in prisons and the many enforced disappearances.

85. Greece noted with appreciation a number of legal measures taken to promote human rights, including the new Constitution, adopted in 2016, the adoption of national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating against violence, as well as amendments to the Criminal Code introducing a definition of torture.

86. Honduras noted the inclusion of a section of human rights in the new Constitution, adopted in 2016, and the establishment of the position of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

87. Iceland welcomed the Constitutional provision recognizing equal rights for women and men but expressed concerns about continued underrepresentation of women in the public and private sectors and the criminalization of sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex.

88. India noted with appreciation the adoption of the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating human trafficking, the establishment of the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the constitutional provisions guaranteeing social security for persons with disabilities.

89. Indonesia commended Turkmenistan for the adoption in 2016 of the Ombudsman Act. It noted the National Action Plan on Human Rights in Turkmenistan for the period 2016–2020 and National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons for the period 2016–2018 and expressed its hope that those action plans would contribute to improvement of the human rights situation.

90. The Islamic Republic of Iran commended the Government for the adoption and implementation of the National Socioeconomic Development Programme for the period 2011–2030, the revised National Presidential Programme on the Improvement of Social and Living Conditions and the Presidential Programme on Socioeconomic Development for the period 2018–2024.

91. Iraq commended the Government for the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020, and the submission of reports to various treaty bodies, which had demonstrated the country's commitment to the respect of human rights.

92. Ireland encouraged Turkmenistan to ensure an effective and independent functioning of the Office of the Ombudsperson, in accordance with the Paris Principles. It noted that,

although the National Action Plan on Human Rights included commitments to receiving visits by special procedure mandate holders, no such visits had taken place yet. It remained concerned about restrictions on freedom of association.

93. Italy commended Turkmenistan on the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson and the adoption of the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating trafficking in persons.

94. Kazakhstan expressed hope that the national action plans on human rights, on gender equality and on combating human trafficking would contribute to the improvement of human rights situation in the country. It noted with appreciation the establishment of the position of Commissioner for Human Rights and the engagement of Turkmenistan with the United Nations human rights treaty bodies.

95. Kyrgyzstan noted the extended list of human rights in the new Constitution and the efforts that had been made to protect the rights of women and eliminate the worst form of child labour.

96. The Lao People's Democratic Republic commended Turkmenistan on the adoption of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020 and the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020.

97. Latvia noted measures that had been taken by the Government and encouraged it to take further efforts in fulfilling human rights obligations.

98. Malaysia commended Turkmenistan on its efforts directed at socioeconomic development. It noted measures that had been taken by the Government to raise the awareness of government officials, young people, local authorities, law enforcement bodies and other relevant stakeholders in the field of human rights by holding regular talks, meetings and round-table discussions.

99. Maldives commended Turkmenistan for its implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and for adopting the State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act.

100. Mexico commended Turkmenistan for the adoption in 2016 of the new Constitution, which included human rights provisions. It called upon the Government to ensure full compliance of the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights with the Paris Principles. It also noted measures that had been taken to ensure gender equality.

101. Montenegro called upon the Government to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and to improve cooperation with the special procedures. It encouraged the Government to take additional measures to ensure the independence and effectiveness of the national human rights institution in accordance with Paris Principles.

102. Morocco welcomed the adoption in 2016 of the new constitution and the adoption of the Ombudsperson Act. It welcomed the Government's efforts to protect and promote human rights.

103. Nepal noted the adoption in 2016 of the Ombudsperson Act, which enabled the establishment of the Commissioner for Human Rights. It believed that strengthening that institution and implementing the National Action Plan on Human Rights and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons would enhance the protection and promotion of human rights.

104. Oman noted of the achievements Turkmenistan had made in all areas of human rights. It welcomed the adoption of the new Constitution, which included a section on human rights.

105. The delegation of Turkmenistan stated that the Government had cooperated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and OSCE on the access of international organizations to places of detention. Representatives of ICRC and of diplomatic missions and intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations, had carried out visits to penitentiary institutions.

106. The delegation reported on various measures that had been taken to improve conditions of detention, including prison cells and sanitary and hygiene facilities, and bring them into line with relevant standards and to protect the health of persons deprived of liberty. Turkmenistan has allocated more than $67 million for construction work and repairs to facilities in the prison system and for the acquisition of medical equipment in the period 2011–2017. Following the adoption in 2011 of the Penal Enforcement Code, the laws and regulations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs had been revised to bring them into line with the Code.

107. On the subject of enforced disappearances and unlawful detention, such imprisonments had in fact been carried out on the basis of the court judgments by which individuals had been found guilty of committing criminal offences under domestic legislation. Such imprisonments could not be described as enforced or as involuntary disappearance, as the individuals in question had regular contact with their family members.

108. Courts had not recorded any complaints or instances of torture or ill-treatment since the amendment to the Criminal Code had been introduced in 2012 to incorporate an article criminalizing torture. The Ministry of the Interior had introduced measures to prevent torture or inhuman treatment in penitentiary institutions.

109. The right to freedom of movement, including the right to leave the country, has been enshrined in the new Constitution and protected by national laws. The temporary restrictions on the right of citizens to freedom of movement had been introduced under the provisions of relevant laws in order to protect national security and public order, and to ensure the safety and health of citizens.

110. The State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act had introduced protection measures against harassment, sexual violence, abduction and trafficking of women and men. There was no specific offence of domestic violence in domestic legislation. However, domestic legislation criminalized acts that harmed the dignity and physical integrity of all individuals, including women, as well as acts of humiliation or cruelty and acts that inflicted various types of bodily injury. One of the objectives of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Turkmenistan for the period 2015–2020 had been to examine national legislation in the light of international standards and best practices and to develop proposals on how to improve further domestic legislation to effectively prevent domestic violence.

111. Responding to calls for the ratification of human rights instruments, the delegation explained that Turkmenistan considered it important to carry out preparatory work prior to such ratifications, by analysing domestic legislation and studying the feasibility of legal reforms.

112. The delegation did not share the view expressed during the interactive dialogue that media outlets critical of the Government faced serious restrictions in the country. The statistics on the use of the Internet and social media indicated that there were no limitations on the access by the population to the Internet.

113. The delegation thanked the participants of the interactive dialogue for their active input and reassured them that all of the recommendations that had been put forward would be examined thoroughly and used to improve further the human rights situation in the country.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

114. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Turkmenistan and enjoy the support of Turkmenistan:**

114.1 **Carry on ratifying international human rights treaties (Azerbaijan);**

114.2 **Ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education (Afghanistan);**

114.3 Accelerate its efforts towards acceding and fully implementing the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Philippines);

114.4 Consider extending a standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders based on the international commitments assumed by the Government (Paraguay);

114.5 Extend a standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders (Portugal);

114.6 Extend a standing invitation to the human rights special procedure mandate holders and mechanisms (Honduras);

114.7 Consider strengthening cooperation with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including receiving the visits requested so far as a first step towards issuing a standing open invitation (Ukraine);

114.8 Continue constructive cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms (Tajikistan);

114.9 Continue constructive cooperation with international human rights mechanisms (Cuba);

114.10 Accede to UNESCO (Oman);

114.11 Ensure that the Office of the Ombudsperson complies with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) (Qatar);

114.12 Take further steps to ensure the effective independence of the Office of the Ombudsperson in accordance with the Paris Principles and strengthen its mandate by ensuring that it has the competence to consider complaints and monitor detention facilities (Republic of Moldova);

114.13 Strengthen the Office of the Ombudsperson to enable its accreditation as an A-status national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Australia);

114.14 Guarantee the efficiency and the independence of the national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights in conformity with the Paris Principles, and adopt a national plan of action for children (Spain);

114.15 Build up the status of the national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles (Ukraine);

114.16 Continue to strengthen the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights (India);

114.17 Continue efforts to ensure the smooth functioning and full independence of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsperson), in accordance with the Paris Principles (Djibouti);

114.18 Continue efforts to strengthen the capacity and independence of its national human rights institution, namely the Ombudsperson of Turkmenistan (Indonesia);

114.19 Continue to strengthen the newly constituted national human rights institution and other relevant mechanisms (Nepal);

114.20 Strengthen the Interdepartmental Commission on Compliance with the International Obligations Undertaken by Turkmenistan in the Field of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, in order that this Interdepartmental Commission ensures the follow-up on the implementation of recommendations received from international bodies (Paraguay);

114.21 **Allocate sufficient human and financial resources to sustainably implement the policies that promote and protect the rights of women and children (Philippines);**

114.22 **Continue to implement the national action plans with special attention to the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020 (Bangladesh);**

114.23 **Implement the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020 and the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020 (Cuba);**

114.24 **Establish a monitoring mechanism for the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2015–2020, the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons for the period 2016–2018 and the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020 (Greece);**

114.25 **Publish swiftly the results of the 2012 national population and housing census (Uruguay);**

114.26 **Accelerate the approval and implementation of the national census on health care and the status of women in the family (Uruguay);**

114.27 **Continue to bring national human rights legislation into line with international human rights standards (Azerbaijan);**

114.28 **Reform the relevant legislation to bring it into line with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including by simplifying the legal and procedural requirements for the registration of civil society organizations and by minimizing reporting obligations to authorities (Ireland);**

114.29 **Continue efforts to harmonize national legislation with international obligations of Turkmenistan (Morocco);**

114.30 **Protect the constitutional principle of equality of rights and freedoms of citizens and fulfil the country's international commitments on gender equality (Cuba);**

114.31 **Take further efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (Uzbekistan);**

114.32 **Enhance its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (Egypt);**

114.33 **Maintain economic development dynamics and reforms with a view to improving the well-being of the population (Azerbaijan);**

114.34 **Follow-up and implement the National Socioeconomic Development Programme for the period 2011–2030 based on a participatory approach that includes all local stakeholders (Morocco);**

114.35 **Continue its efforts to promote economic and social sustainable development to lay a solid foundation for its people to enjoy all human rights (China);**

114.36 **Fight against corruption and strengthen the capacity of institutions to effectively detect such practice, investigate cases of corruption and prosecute the perpetrators (Algeria);**

114.37 **Provide information to the families of persons in custody who previously have been reported as having disappeared, including their current places of detention and details of custodial sentences (Sweden);**

114.38 **Introduce domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape, into the Criminal Code as a specific crime, and create an independent mechanism for receiving victims' complaints (France);**

114.39 **Include domestic violence in the Criminal Code as a separate offence (Kyrgyzstan);**

114.40 **Continue to take further steps for the strengthening of judicial system (Tajikistan);**

114.41 **Establish clear criteria for the appointment, tenure and removal of judges, as part of national efforts to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and due process (Mexico);**

114.42 **Align legislation and legal practices with international standards in order to ensure fair and effective treatment by the judicial system, especially for young people (Djibouti);**

114.43 **Respect the right to a fair trial and revoke prosecutors' authority to hold convicted persons indefinitely by a simple written decision even though they have served their sentences (France);**

114.44 **Provide access to international monitoring mechanisms in all places of detention in line with international standards (Belgium);**

114.45 **Sustain its commitment in the promotion of religious tolerance, as well as its efforts in upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms (Nigeria);**

114.46 **Respect the rights of Christians to exercise their freedom of religion and belief without fear of imprisonments or other forms of persecutions (Poland);**

114.47 **Take further efforts to improve the enjoyment of the right to opinion and expression (Iraq);**

114.48 **Continue its efforts in combating trafficking in persons (Nigeria);**

114.49 **Continue to enhance Turkmenistan's regulation against human trafficking (Indonesia);**

114.50 **Work in partnership with the International Labour Organization to eliminate forced labour in connection with State-sponsored cotton harvesting (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

114.51 **Ensure comprehensive implementation of the programme for enhancing the employment sector and creating new jobs in Turkmenistan for the period 2015–2020, as well as the action plan for its implementation, above all, in order to ensure maximum level of employment for persons with disabilities (Russian Federation);**

114.52 **Continue consolidating its social policies, especially in the area of economic, social and cultural rights, in order to continue to improve the quality of life of its people (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

114.53 **Continue its efforts to protect the rights of women and children and to provide them social protection (Yemen);**

114.54 **Take effective measures to eliminate and further prevent violations of economic, social and cultural rights (Djibouti);**

114.55 **Increase the ongoing efforts to enhance the population's living standards and welfare, so that they pave the way further for human rights protection (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

114.56 **Continue its efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights in the country by strengthening its national policies and programmes with the aim of further improving the well-being of its people (Malaysia);**

114.57 **Make additional efforts to provide access to potable water and adequate sanitary conditions, particularly in rural areas (Serbia);**

114.58 Fully implement its programme for the supply of clean drinking water to the population, and share good experiences in this regard (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);

114.59 Continue to further strengthen its efforts to safeguard the right to health with an enhanced allocation of resources in this area (Bangladesh);

114.60 Continue efforts to promote health care in rural areas (Egypt);

114.61 Continue to strengthen logistical and material provision for health-care institutions, particularly in rural areas (Belarus);

114.62 Continue efforts to develop infrastructure for health facilities and maternal and child health-care centres and to implement a strategy for the development of the production of medicine with the aim at expanding access for all citizens to quality health care (Saudi Arabia);

114.63 Address the insufficient number of family doctors, nurses and midwives particularly in rural areas, the lack of medicines and the need to improve the skills of medical personnel (Serbia);

114.64 Continue to take measures to expand public access to quality services in health care and education (Uzbekistan);

114.65 Continue efforts to promote access to education, especially in rural areas (Senegal);

114.66 Continue to adopt positive measures to better protect its people rights to education, health care and others (China);

114.67 Continue to take appropriate measures for providing quality education and health care (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);

114.68 Enhance capacity-building to improve the education and health-care systems in the country (Islamic Republic of Iran);

114.69 Continue its efforts to promote gender equality, with a particular focus on positive measures designed to increase women's participation in public and political life (Republic of Moldova);

114.70 Abolish gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination in its Labour Code (Republic of Korea);

114.71 Continue to promote women's rights, to ensure that they are fully respected (Lao People's Democratic Republic);

114.72 Promote and advance gender equality to counter stereotypes on the roles and responsibilities of women in the family and society at large through public awareness, education and training programmes (Iceland);

114.73 Continue assistance and promotion on women's empowerment in both the public and private sectors (Lao People's Democratic Republic);

114.74 Revise provisions in the Labour Code that justify restrictions on women's employment opportunities based on gender stereotypes (Iceland);

114.75 Strengthen legislative measures and public policies designed to promote and protect the rights of women and to facilitate their empowerment (Bulgaria);

114.76 Strengthen preventive measures for dealing with violence against women, including by collecting data and raising awareness about gender equality and women's rights (Slovenia);

114.77 Accelerate its efforts towards eliminating violence against women, and consider adopting relevant legislation (Georgia);

114.78 Adopt legislation specifically criminalizing violence against women, ensure thorough investigations and provide appropriate training to the police,

the judiciary and other relevant stakeholders on how to address such cases (Canada);

114.79 **Take concrete measures to fight gender-based violence, including within families, such as legislative measures and plans of action following consultations with civil society (Belgium);**

114.80 **Adopt a comprehensive law, covering all forms of violence against women, including a national action plan in this area (Kyrgyzstan);**

114.81 **Adopt legislation specifically criminalizing violence against women, particularly domestic and sexual violence, and ensure its effective implementation (Latvia);**

114.82 **Adopt a national action plan for children, taking into account the concluding observations of 2015 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Portugal);**

114.83 **Continue cooperation with UNICEF to develop a national plan of action plan on the interest of children (Belarus);**

114.84 **Adopt a national action plan on the interest of children in Turkmenistan (Kyrgyzstan);**

114.85 **Continue its efforts together with UNICEF to improve ways and means of protecting children's rights by implementing the programme on the development of the juvenile justice system (Maldives);**

114.86 **Strengthen its policy on prevention and combat of child labour, and on the full guarantee of the rights of child, with special attention to children without parental care (Tajikistan);**

114.87 **Introduce a clear ban on the sale of children and on child prostitution and pornography in the relevant law (Kyrgyzstan);**

114.88 **Discontinue the practice of temporary placement of children in institutions and develop and implement a comprehensive deinstitutionalization strategy (Bulgaria);**

114.89 **Expand the scope of the curriculum on basic life skills, in order to comprehensively address issues related to sexuality, protect adolescents from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and prepare them for adult life (Honduras);**

114.90 **Involve persons with disabilities in the implementation of the plan of action for the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities (Qatar);**

114.91 **Expand programmes and initiatives to eliminate negative stereotypes and prejudice against persons with disabilities (Maldives);**

114.92 **Bring existing legislation fully in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (Brazil);**

114.93 **Harmonize its legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in particular consider adopting a social and human rights-based model for disability (Bulgaria);**

114.94 **Repeal laws that allow the deprivation of liberty of persons with disabilities mainly due to their disability and to the potential danger posed by them (Spain);**

114.95 **Improve the situation of persons with disabilities (Iraq);**

114.96 **Develop measures to preserve ethnic, cultural and religious diversity and strengthen intercultural dialogue in society (Russian Federation);**

114.97 **Consider the possibility of opening cultural centres in the country for representatives of non-titular nationalities residing in Turkmenistan in order to**

allow them to be able to fulfil their educational and cultural needs (Kazakhstan);

114.98 Ensure that non-citizens have access to education, housing, health care, employment and birth registration without discrimination (Algeria).

115. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Turkmenistan and have been noted by Turkmenistan:

115.1 Adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law (Portugal);

115.2 Adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law and ensure adequate and effective protection against discrimination on any ground (Montenegro);

115.3 Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that ensures adequate and effective protection against all forms of discrimination, containing a list of all grounds for discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity (Honduras).

116. The following recommendations will be examined by Turkmenistan, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council:

116.1 Ratify the international human rights instruments to which it is not yet party, in particular the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Honduras);

116.2 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Senegal) (Iraq) (Montenegro) (Ukraine) (Portugal);

116.3 Adhere to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Togo);

116.4 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Senegal) (Burundi) (Denmark) (Greece) (France) (Chile) (Ukraine) (Portugal);

116.5 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Norway) (Afghanistan);

116.6 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as previously recommended (Estonia);

116.7 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and establish a prevention system of regular visits to places of detention (Poland);

116.8 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and establish an independent mechanism for monitoring of all places of detention (Australia);

116.9 Accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and establish a national system that independently and regularly monitors and inspects all places of detention without prior notice (Czechia);

116.10 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and allow full

access of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to places of detention in accordance with ICRC principles (Germany);

116.11 **Sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, enabling the independent inspection of prisons and detention centres (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

116.12 **Adhere to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Togo);**

116.13 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Portugal) (Ukraine);**

116.14 **Sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Slovakia);**

116.15 **Intensify internal examinations related to the accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Georgia);**

116.16 **Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia) (Philippines);**

116.17 **Consider ratifying the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) (Philippines);**

116.18 **Ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization (Denmark);**

116.19 **Ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Armenia);**

116.20 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Republic of Korea) (Austria);**

116.21 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court, as previously recommended (Estonia);**

116.22 **Continue the efforts to adhere to the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (Paraguay);**

116.23 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and fully align national legislation with all obligations under the Rome Statute, as previously recommended (Latvia);**

116.24 **Accept the authority of the Committee against Torture to receive and examine individual communications and sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Spain);**

116.25 **Consider extending a standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, as well as the ratification of the Rome Statute, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Uruguay);**

116.26 **Facilitate a visit by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (Norway);**

116.27 **Collaborate with special procedure mandate holders, namely the Special Rapporteur on torture, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, as well as the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances, welcoming them, when requested, in the country (Switzerland);**

116.28 **Develop a schedule of visits of all United Nations special procedure mandate holders who have asked to visit the country and take measures to facilitate such visits (Chile);**

116.29 **Authorize the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council to visit Turkmenistan, in accordance with the National Action Plan on Human Rights for the period 2016–2020 (France);**

116.30 **Permit visits from all United Nations special procedure mandate holders who have requested to visit the country (Ireland);**

116.31 **Allow the United Nations special procedure mandate holders to visit the country (Italy);**

116.32 **Cooperate fully with the United Nations, to facilitate all pending requests for visits by the Human Rights Council's special procedure mandate holders and to respond favourably and constructively to the views of the Human Rights Committee (Austria);**

116.33 **Respond positively to pending visit requests by the special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and consider the extension of a standing invitation to all mandate holders, as previously recommended (Latvia);**

116.34 **Strengthen cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, and issue a standing invitation to all special procedure mandate holders (Czechia);**

116.35 **Eliminate, in law and in practice, all forms of discrimination, including those based on sexual orientation or gender identity (Czechia);**

116.36 **Take measures to fight all forms of discrimination, including when based on sexual orientation (Italy);**

116.37 **Consider the adoption of a general law against discrimination based on gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation and gender identity, or any other form of intolerance (Uruguay);**

116.38 **Decriminalize sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex (Iceland);**

116.39 **Decriminalize consensual sexual relations between people of the same sex and put an end to the stigmatization of homosexuality, bisexuality, intersexuality and transsexuality (Uruguay);**

116.40 **Ensure that no form of discrimination or violence against persons based on their sexual orientation or gender identity is tolerated and that all such cases are properly investigated and sanctioned (Iceland);**

116.41 **Take the necessary measures to establish, in its national legislation, a comprehensive legal framework of adequate and effective protection against all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and also repeal the criminalization of consensual sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex (Argentina);**

116.42 **Investigate and hold accountable officials suspected of committing torture or other serious human rights violations or abuses (United States of America);**

116.43 **Intensify efforts to combat cases of torture and forced disappearances (Italy);**

116.44 **Study a possibility of establishing a national preventive mechanism to prevent torture (Kazakhstan);**

116.45 **Investigate promptly, thoroughly and impartially all allegations of arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment, and — to this end — establish an independent, accessible and effective complaints mechanism for all places of detention (Canada);**

116.46 **Put an end to the practice of arbitrary and incommunicado detention and forced disappearance, and provide information on the whereabouts of all people who have disappeared in prison (Chile);**

116.47 **Abolish incommunicado detention, and ensure prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into all cases of alleged disappearances (Czechia);**

116.48 **End the practice of enforced disappearances and ensure that following prompt, thorough and impartial investigations perpetrators are brought to justice, and provide effective remedies to victims and their families, including reparations (Canada);**

116.49 **Tackle the issue of enforced disappearances, by, inter alia, acceding to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Netherlands);**

116.50 **Respect its international commitments on enforced disappearance, and become a party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (France);**

116.51 **Investigate and sanction all reported cases of enforced disappearances and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Argentina);**

116.52 **Investigate the allegations of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention as well as torture, ill-treatment and holding individuals incommunicado in prisons (Poland);**

116.53 **Allow unhindered access to enforced disappeared persons by international monitoring bodies, including United Nations representatives and the special procedure mandate holders, and provide information on their whereabouts (Norway);**

116.54 **Provide those who are imprisoned, including in the Ovodan-Depe and Seydi prisons, access to independent inspectors and other visitors and permit those visitors to conduct private and fully confidential interviews with prisoners, consistent with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (United States of America);**

116.55 **Inform relatives and the public about the whereabouts of all persons who have been under arrest and whose fate is currently unknown, and ensure access to lawyers of their choice (Germany);**

116.56 **Grant independent international mechanisms full access to all places of detention, thoroughly investigate allegations of enforced disappearances and torture and improve detention conditions in line with the international standards (Austria);**

116.57 **Improve the conditions of detention, in line with international norms and rules, namely the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela rules) (Switzerland);**

116.58 **Establish a system of regular and independent monitoring of places of detention, and facilitate effective monitoring by independent organizations (Estonia);**

116.59 **Adopt the necessary measures in order to recognize the right to conscientious objection to compulsory military service (Argentina);**

116.60 **Take concrete measures to protect and respect individuals' rights to exercise freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression, including on the Internet, social media and in traditional media, including by preventing harassment of journalists operating in the country (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

116.61 **Reform government practices that restrict freedoms of religion or belief, expression and movement to ensure that individuals are not punished for expressing their opinions or beliefs (United States of America);**

116.62 **Take measures to fully realize freedom of expression, including on the Internet and social media (Republic of Korea);**

116.63 **Effectively implement the provisions of the Media Law that safeguard media pluralism and prohibit censorship (Estonia);**

116.64 **Ensure freedom of expression and access to information, and stop interfering with access to the Internet as well as censorship of online and print media (Germany);**

116.65 **Ensure unobstructed Internet access and cease censorship of online media, including of foreign websites and communication applications. This includes the repeal of all provisions from the Law on the Regulation of the Development of the Internet and the Provision of Internet Services that require State licencing of the activities of Internet providers (Netherlands);**

116.66 **Respect the right to freedom of expression, allow the media to operate without any interference and provide an enabling and protective environment where journalists and activists can exercise their human rights without reprisals (Austria);**

116.67 **Adopt measures, including through amending relevant laws, to ensure that the Internet, television, radio and print media serve as a channel for receiving and transmitting independent public interest information in the country (Slovakia);**

116.68 **Include a ban on censorship in the Constitution and expand the definition of the ban on censorship in the Law on Mass Media to include every person who makes public communications, in accordance with its international obligations (Sweden);**

116.69 **Decriminalize defamation, and include it in the Civil Code in accordance with international standards (Estonia);**

116.70 **Cease blocking access to Internet sites and social media networks (Sweden);**

116.71 **Take positive steps to protect and promote the freedoms of expression and assembly, including by enforcing legal provisions that safeguard media pluralism and prohibit censorship and by ending forced mobilization of residents for participation in government-organized mass events (Australia);**

116.72 **Revise laws and practices in order to guarantee the full enjoyment of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and ensure that any restrictions comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Latvia);**

116.73 **Guarantee fully the rights of freedom of association, assembly and expression, and of the press (Spain);**

116.74 **Strengthen efforts to guarantee the respect for fundamental freedoms, including by simplifying the procedures for legal registration of NGOs and religious groups (Italy);**

116.75 **Release immediately and unconditionally all persons imprisoned as a result of peaceful exercise of freedom of expression, collection and distribution of information, and journalistic activity (Norway);**

116.76 **Take concrete steps to ensure the protection of journalists, media personnel and human rights defenders against attacks, and prosecute those responsible for such acts, as previously recommended (Estonia);**

116.77 **Ensure that human rights defenders and journalists are able to conduct their work and activities freely online and offline, and release all prisoners of conscience (Slovenia);**

116.78 **Recognize publicly, protect and support, notably with administrative measures, the work of human rights defenders, including women and young human rights defenders (Belgium);**

116.79 **Stop threats to, physical attacks against and arbitrary detention and conviction of human rights defenders and individuals for exercising their freedoms of expression and assembly (Norway);**

116.80 **End the arbitrary detention and harassment of, as well as travel bans and other acts of intimidation against journalists, media workers and human rights defenders (Germany);**

116.81 **Release all human rights defenders and journalists, and guarantee an independent media free from undue influence or interference (Czechia);**

116.82 **Revise laws and policies to ensure an enabling environment for human rights defenders, an independent media and a robust civil society (Canada);**

116.83 **Amend legislation, including the Constitution and the Law on Migration, by including explicit legal guarantees that establish the right to exit freely from and return to Turkmenistan, in accordance with international law (Sweden);**

116.84 **Take immediate legal action to reverse the policy on restricting the rights of everyone to leave the country and return to their own country (Norway);**

116.85 **Establish a time-bound national plan of action to address forced labour in cotton farming and abolish mandatory production and sanctions for non-compliance with cotton quotas (Chile);**

116.86 **Grant fair and adequate compensation to owners and residents of Ashgabat who were evicted from their properties (Togo);**

116.87 **Review the provisions regarding compulsory HIV testing contained in the 2016 Act on controlling the spread of the disease caused by HIV, while providing early diagnosis and treatment to mothers living with HIV and their infants, in the light of the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee and the relevant special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council (Brazil);**

116.88 **Ensure that the implementation of measures to prevent HIV does not lead to discriminatory practices and is in line with international human rights obligations (Mexico);**

116.89 **Introduce legal measures that prohibit forced and child labour (Poland);**

116.90 **Remove criminal penalties restricting freedom of opinion and expression (Mexico).**

117. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Turkmenistan was headed by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Mr. Vepa Hajyyev, and composed of the following members:

- Ambassador Atageldi Haljanov, Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations Office at Geneva;
- Ms. Kumush Gurbanniyazova, Head of Department of the Ministry of Adalat (Justice) of Turkmenistan;
- Mr. Geldimyrat Veliyev, Senior Officer of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Turkmenistan;
- Ms. Selvi Sysoyeva, Senior Specialist of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of Turkmenistan;
- Mr. Amanmyrat Kerimov, Senior Prosecutor of the General Prosecutor's Office of Turkmenistan;
- Ms. Shemshat Atajanova, Head of the Department of the Turkmen National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan;
- Ms. Suray Seyilbayeva, Attaché of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.